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ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
Washington, DC 20231

Submitted herewith for filing is the patent application of

Inventor: Yoshinori Kumasaka

Title: DISPOSABLE DIAPER

Based are:

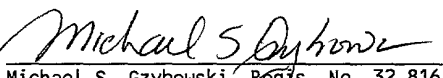
☒ Two (2) Sheets of Drawings.☐ An assignment of the invention to _____.☒ A certified copy of a Japanese application.☐ A verified statement to establish small entity status under 37 CFR 1.9 and 37 CFR 1.27.☐ Other _____

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FOR:	FILED	EXTRA	RATE	FEE	RATE	FEE
BASIC FEE				\$ 345.00		\$ 690.00
TOTAL CLAIMS	7	-20 = 0	x \$ 9 =	\$	OR x \$ 18 =	\$ 0.00
INDEP CLAIMS	1	- 3 = 0	x \$ 39 =	\$	OR x \$ 78 =	\$ 0.00
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIMS			+ \$130 =	\$	OR + \$260 =	\$ 0.00
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☐ Please charge my Deposit Account No. 02-0385, BAKER & DANIELS, the amount of \$ _____. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.☒ A check in the amount of \$ 690.00 to cover the filing fee is enclosed. (Check No. 047693.)☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of the following fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-0385, BAKER & DANIELS. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.☒ Any additional filing fees required under 37 CFR 1.16.☐ Any patent application processing fees under 37 CFR 1.17.☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of the following fees during the pendency of this application or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-0385, BAKER & DANIELS. A duplicate copy of this letter is enclosed.☒ Any patent application processing fees under 37 CFR 1.17.☐ The issue fee set in 37 CFR 1.18 at or before mailing of the Notice of Allowance, pursuant to 37 CFR 1.311(b).☒ Any filing fees under 37 CFR 1.16 for presentation of extra claims.

Respectfully submitted,


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06-16-00

A

"EXPRESS MAIL" COVER LETTER
U.S. PATENT APPLICATIONS

Date: June 15, 2000

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

Re: Application for United States Letters Patent

APPLICANT: Yoshinori Kumasaka

TITLE OF INVENTION: DISPOSABLE DIAPER

Sir:

Forwarded herewith is the above-identified application, consisting of the following:

Specification (9 Pages)
Abstract
Claims (3 Pages)
Drawings (2 Sheets)
Declaration Executed X Unexecuted
Assignment Yes X No
Verified Statement Yes X No
Information Disclosure Statement Yes X No
Preliminary Amendment Yes X No
Claim for Priority X Yes No

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DISPOSABLE DIAPER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a disposable diaper absorbing and containing body wastes.

Disposable diapers utilizing an inelastic or non-stretchable sheet as its topsheet and/or backsheet is well known. It is also well known in such diapers to secure elastic members under tension in circumferential directions along leg-holes and a waist-hole, respectively, to the inner surface of the topsheet and/or the backsheet and thereby to ensure a good fit of the leg-holes and the waist-hole to the wearer's skin.

In the case of such a well known diaper, a waist size of the diaper has sometimes been dimensioned to be substantially larger than an average waist size of the wearer particularly when the diaper is of pull-on type so that the diaper may be easily put on the wearer's body with the waist-hole being adequately opened. This is true for the leg-holes. However, such dimensioning has necessarily required an amount of cloth much more than a sufficient amount of cloth to cover the wearer's legs and waist.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of this invention to provide a disposable diaper improved to be easily put on the wearer's body without excessive consumption of cloth.

According to this invention, there is provided a disposable diaper having front and rear waist regions and a crotch region extending therebetween, the diaper comprising at least one of the front and rear waist regions having an edge zone extending in a circumferential direction around a waist-hole being elastic over a full length of the edge, wherein:

the waist region comprises a covering zone formed integrally with the crotch region to position a waist region of the wearer and an elastic zone attached along an upper edge of the covering zone and adapted to be elastically stretchable in the circumferential direction and the elastic zone comprises a first member adapted to be elastically stretchable in the circumferential direction to a length beyond a length of the covering zone and a second member covering the first member, the second member being adapted to be inelastically stretchable to a length beyond the length of the covering zone and to be attached to the upper edge of the covering zone.

The disposable diaper according to this invention enables

the elastic zones associated with the waist-hole to be stretched to a length substantially larger than a total length of the the edges of the covering zones and thereby to open the waist-hole sufficiently to ensure that the diaper can be easily put on the wearer's body, even when the covering zones of the front and rear waist regions have no stretchability in the circumferential direction. With the diaper, it is unnecessary to dimension a circumferential dimension of the covering zones to be substantially larger than a circumferential dimension of the wearer's torso and therefore stock material required to make the diaper can be correspondingly reduced. Particularly when the rubber ribbon constituting the elastic zone is covered with the non-stretchable sheet previously formed with gathers, it is unnecessary to cover the rubber ribbon with the relatively expensive stretchable sheet.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a partially cutaway perspective view showing a diaper according to a principle of this invention; and

Fig. 2 is a partially cutaway perspective view showing the diaper developed longitudinally thereof.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

A disposable diaper according to this invention will be described in more details with reference to the accompanying drawings.

A disposable diaper 1 shown by Fig. 1 in a partially cutaway perspective view is of pull-on or shorts-type and has a front waist region 6, a rear waist region 7 and a crotch region 8 extending between these two waist regions 6, 7. The front and rear waist regions 6, 7 are put flat together along their respective pairs of transversely opposite side edges 11, 12 and joined together at joining spots 13 arranged along the side edges 11, 12 intermittently in a vertical direction as viewed in Fig. 1 so as to form a waist-hole 16 and a pair of leg-holes 17. An elastic member 18 extends circumferentially around the waist-hole 16 and elastic members 19 extend circumferentially around respective the leg-holes 17. The diaper 1 comprises a liquid-pervious topsheet 2 defining the inner side of the diaper 1, a liquid-impervious backsheet 3 defining the outer side of the diaper 1 and a liquid-absorbent core 4 disposed between the topsheet 2 and the backsheet 3.

Fig. 2 is a partially cutaway perspective view the diaper of Fig. 1 cut open along the joining spots 13 and having its front and rear waist regions 6, 7 developed apart in a direction of double-headed arrow A. The front and rear waist regions 6,

7 respectively comprise front and rear covering zones 21, 22 adapted to cover front and rear waist regions of the wearer and front and rear elastic zones 18A, 18B identical in shape as well as in size provided along front and rear ends 23, 24 of the respective covering zones 21, 22 extending circumferentially along the waist-hole 16. The crotch region 8 comprises a crotch covering zone 26 adapted to cover a crotch region of the wearer and a pair of elastic zones 19 provided along curved edges 27 of the covering zone 26. The front and rear covering zones 21, 22 and the crotch covering zone 26 are formed by the topsheet 2, the backsheet 3 and the core 4 which are continuous longitudinally of the diaper 1. The core 4 is hourglass-shaped and portions of the topsheet 2 and the backsheets 3 extending outward beyond a peripheral edge of the core 4 are put flat and joined together by means of hot melt adhesive agent (not shown).

The diaper 1 is assembled by putting the transversely opposite side edges 11, 12 of the front and rear waist regions 6, 7 flat together, then joining them together at the joining spots 13 and thereby an annular elastic zone 18 is formed by the front and rear elastic zones 18A, 18B. Of the front and rear elastic zones 18A, 18B, the rear elastic zone 18B is illustrated as before this elastic zone 18B is attached to the rear covering zone 22. The rear elastic zone 18B comprises a

rubber ribbon 31 which can be elastically stretched by at least 1.3 times, preferably by 2.0 times, more preferably by at least 3.0 times of a length L of the rear waist region 7 and a covering sheet 32 adapted to cover the rubber ribbon 31, which is longer than the dimension L and stretchable at least at the stretchability of the rubber ribbon 31. The number of the rubber ribbon 31 and shape as well as dimension of its cross-section are not specified. Raw material for the rubber ribbon 31 also is not specified and may be selected from a group including natural rubber, synthetic rubber, synthetic resin elastomer, synthetic resin elastic threads and a woven fabric made of such elastic threads. However, it is important that the front and rear elastic zones 18A, 18B each comprising an assembly of the rubber ribbon 31 and the covering sheet 32 should have their circumferential stretch stress preferably when they are stretched by 3 ~ 20 % lower than a stretch stress exhibited by portions of the front and rear covering zones 21, 22 extending along the elastic zones 18A, 18B having the same widths as the elastic zones 18A, 18B. Generally, the covering sheet 32 is longer than the dimension L and inelastically or elastically stretched as the rubber ribbon 31 is elastically stretched. For example, a non-stretchable sheet longer than the dimension L is formed with gathers 33 undulating in the circumferential

direction along the waist-hole to make this sheet substantially stretchable and attached to the rear covering zone 22. Alternatively, the covering sheet 32 comprise an inelastically stretchable sheet attached to the rear covering zone 22 so that the sheet may be stretched as the rubber ribbon 31 is stretched and forms gathers as the rubber ribbon 31 contracts. It is also possible to use the covering sheet 32 adapted to be elastically stretched together with the rubber ribbon 31.

The rubber ribbon 31 may be covered with a pair of covering sheets 32 in a sandwich fashion or covered with the covering sheet 32 cylindrically shaped adapted to receive the rubber ribbon 31 therein. In any case, the rubber ribbon 31 is secured to the sheet at least at longitudinally opposite ends of the rubber ribbon 31 or, if desired, a length of the rubber ribbon 31 defined between the opposite ends is intermittently or continuously bonded to the covering sheet 32. Specifically to describe in reference with Fig. 2, three to five pieces of synthetic rubber ribbon 31 each having a thickness of 0.3 mm, a width of 2.1 mm and a length of 171 mm are stretched to 400 mm and intermittently bonded to a pair of the non-stretchable covering sheets 32 made of a spun bond nonwoven fabric and having a length of 400 mm by means of a hot melt adhesive agent (not shown) to cover the rubber ribbon 31 with the covering sheet

32 in sandwich fashion and thereby to obtain the rear elastic zone 18B. The rubber ribbon 31 is relaxed to contract and thereby causes the sheet 32 to form the gathers 33. The rear elastic zone 18B contracted to a length of 240 mm in this manner is attached to the rear covering zone 22 having the length L of 240 mm as measured along the waist line by suitable means such as adhesion, heat-sealing or stitching.

With the diaper 1, the elastic zone 18 associated with the waist-hole 16 is stretched as indicated by the imaginary lines in Fig. 1 and said waist-hole 16 is adequately opened so that the diaper 1 can be easily put on the wearer's body even when the front and rear covering zones 21, 22 have no stretchability in the circumferential direction.

With this diaper 1, similarly to the elastic zone 18 associated with the waist-hole 16, each of the elastic zones 19 associated with the leg-holes 17 should be elastically stretchable to a dimension longer than, at least by 1.3 times, preferably at least by 2 times and more preferably at least by 3 times of an actual dimension as measured along the length surrounding edge 27 of the crotch covering zone 26. Such elastic zone 19 may comprise elastically stretchable rubber ribbon and a stretchable covering sheet.

As will be apparent from the foregoing description made

in reference with the accompanying drawings, either both the longitudinal ends of the front and rear waist regions 6, 7 or any one of these ends may be provided with an elastic stretchability in accordance with this invention. It is possible without departing from the scope of this invention to adjust the stretch stresses of the elastic zones 18A, 18B associated with the front and rear waist regions 6, 7 to be different from each other. The well known stock materials may be used to form the topsheet 2 and the backsheet 3 and the core 4. Bonding of the respective members may be performed using suitable means such as adhesion, heat-sealing or stitching.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A disposable diaper having a front waist region, a rear waist region and a crotch region extending therebetween, said diaper comprising at least one of said front and rear waist regions having an edge zone thereof extending in a circumferential direction provided along a full length of said edge zone with an elastic stretchability, wherein:

said waist region comprises a covering zone formed integrally with said crotch region to cover said waist region of diaper wearer and an elastic zone attached along an upper edge of said covering zone and adapted to be elastically stretchable in said circumferential direction; and

said elastic zone comprises a first member adapted to be elastically stretchable in said circumferential direction to a length beyond a length of said covering zone and a second member covering said first member, said second member being adapted to be inelastically stretchable to a length beyond said length of said covering zone and to be attached to said edge of said covering zone.

2. The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said first member comprises a rubber ribbon.

3. The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said second member comprises a sheet material having an initial length beyond the length of said covering zone in said circumferential direction and formed in said circumferential direction with gathers in order to shorten said sheet material substantially to said length of said covering zone.

4. The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said second member comprises a sheet material having a length substantially equal to the length of said covering zone in said circumferential direction and adapted to be inelastically stretchable in said circumferential direction.

5. The diaper according to Claims 1, wherein said covering zone is non-stretchable in said circumferential direction.

6. The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said covering zone is elastically stretchable in said circumferential direction and has a stretch stress higher than a stretch stress of said elastic zone in a portion of said covering zone extending along said elastic zone and having a same width as said elastic zone.

7. The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said diaper has elastically stretchable edges of respective leg-holes and each of these edges comprises an elastically stretchable third member and an inelastically stretchable fourth member adapted to cover said third member.

A B S T R A C T

Front and rear waist regions of a diaper having a waist-hole of which a peripheral edge is elastically stretchable in a circumferential direction respectively include covering zones and elastic zones adapted to be stretchable beyond lengths of the covering zones in the circumferential direction.

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FIG.1

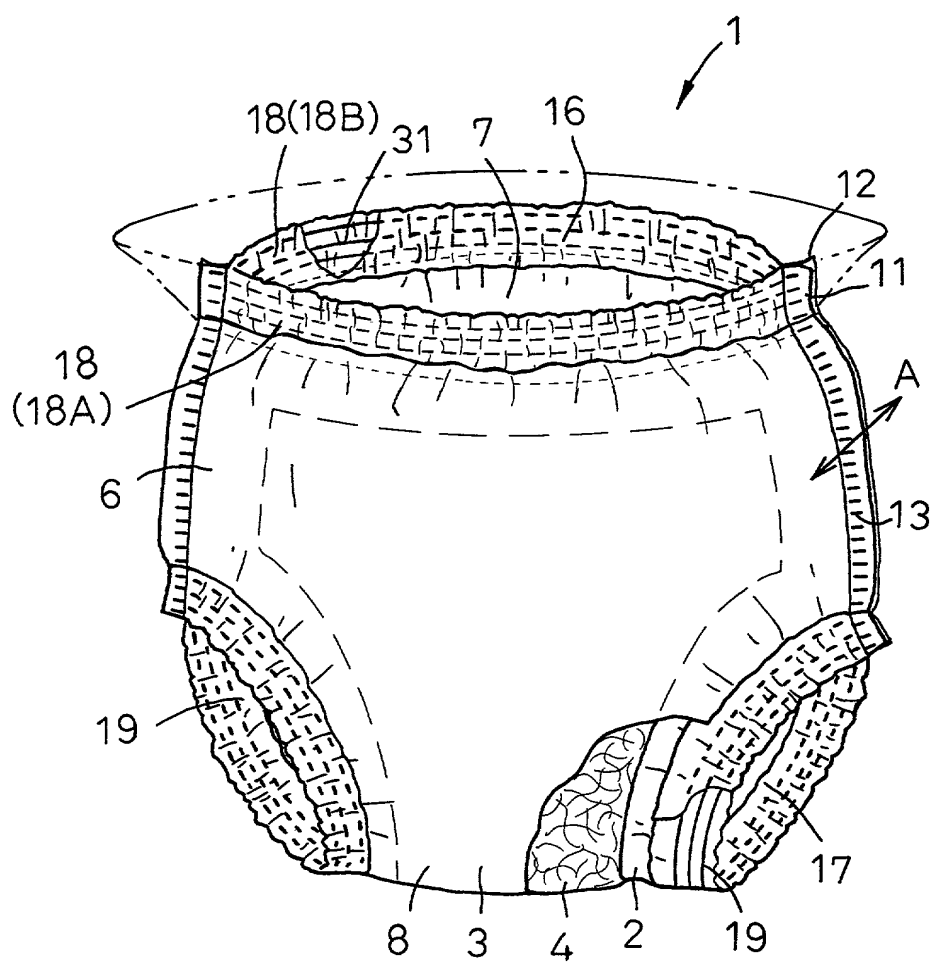
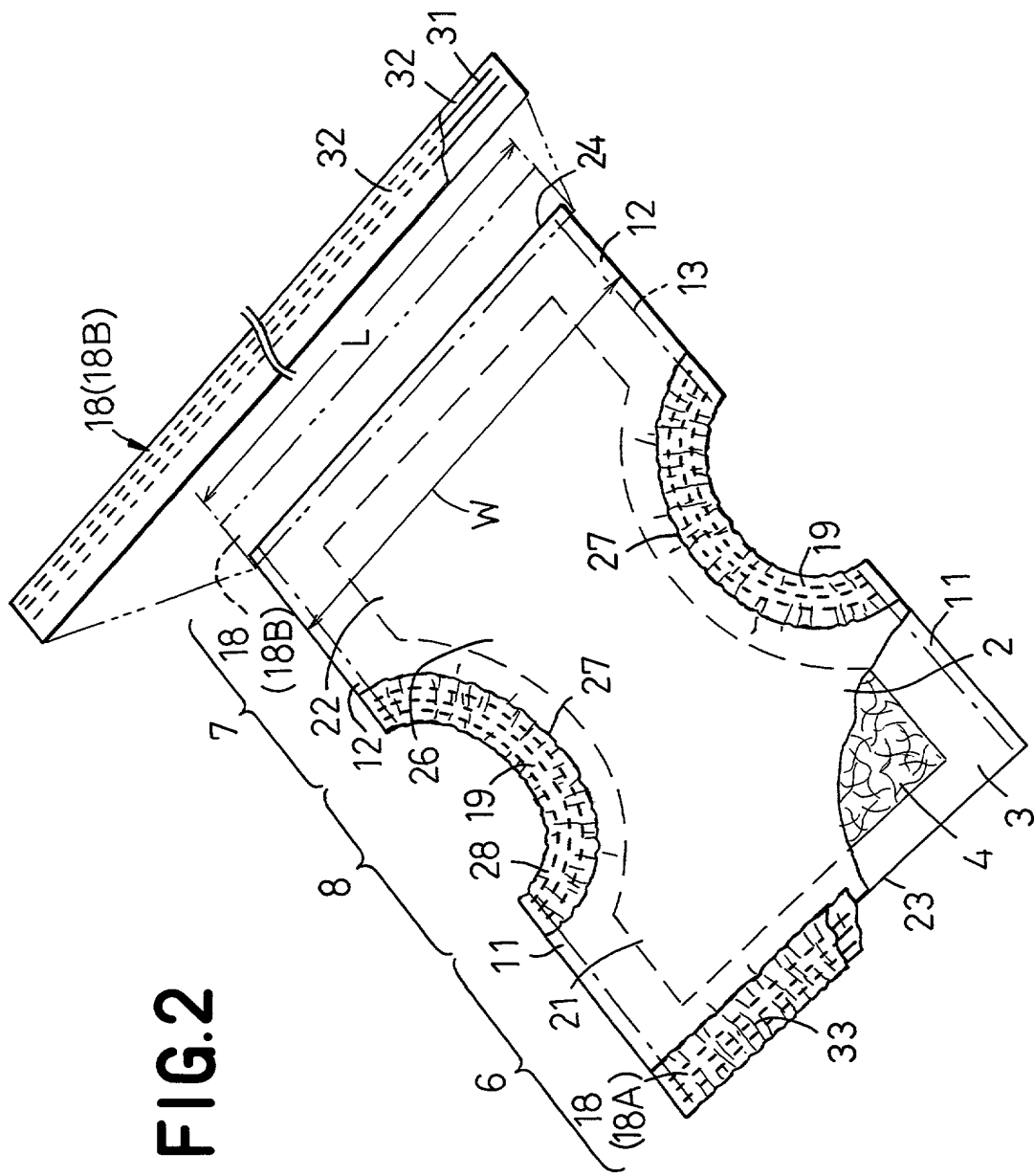


FIG.2



DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR PATENT APPLICATION

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name:

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

DISPOSABLE DIAPER
the specification of which:

☒ [X] is attached hereto.

☐ [] was filed on _____ as
Application Serial No. _____
and was amended on _____
(if applicable)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119, of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

PRIOR FOREIGN APPLICATION(S)

Priority Claimed

<u>11-168184</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>15 June 1999</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [X]	<input type="checkbox"/> []
(Number)	(Country)	(Day/Month/Year Filed)	Yes	No

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120, of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56, which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application.

<u>(Application Serial No.)</u>	<u>(Filing Date)</u>	<u>(Status)(patented, pending, abandoned)</u>
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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under §1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint John F. Hoffman, Regis. No. 26,280; Anthony Niewyk, Regis. No. 24,871; Kevin R. Erdman, Regis. No. 33,687; Michael D. Smith, Regis. No. 40,181; Michael S. Gzybowski, Regis. No. 32,816; Michael D. Schwartz, Regis. No. 44,326; Scott M. Lohnes, Regis. No. 45,451; Steven M. Hanley, Regis. No. P-46,756; Adam F. Cox, Regis. No. P-46,644; Arthur R. Whale, Regis. No. 18,778; Edward J. Prein, Regis. No. 37,212; Michael D. Beck, Regis. No. 32,722; Deborah R. Beck, Regis. No. 37,370; Jeffrey A. Michael, Regis. No. 37,394; Eric J. Groen, Regis. No. 32,230; Gerard T. Gallagher, Regis. No. 39,679; and Robert D. Null, Regis. No. 40,746; of BAKER & DANIELS, as attorney(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

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Inventor's Signature _____ Date _____